



**Coral reefs – an entire earth system – on the brink of functional extinction**

Despite being a cornerstone of ocean health and community resilience, the world lost 14 percent of the coral cover on its reefs between 2009 and 2018, and 90 percent of the world’s remaining coral reefs are threatened and may disappear completely by 2050.

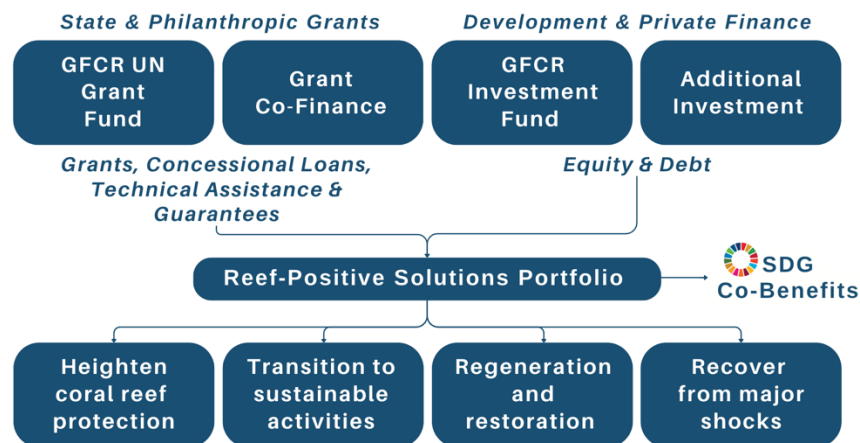
**Without immediate global action to safeguard coral reefs, we face the first climate extinction of an entire ecosystem within our lifetime.**

However, there is still hope. **Scientists have identified pockets of coral habitats that are more resilient to climate change; ‘coral refugia.’** Studies further reveal that interventions addressing local stressors facing coral refugia, including pollution and overfishing, can support reef resilience, including bleaching resistance and/or recovery.

Yet coral conservation, including initiatives to address local drivers of degradation, remains woefully underfunded. In fact, the **scientists and technical experts informing the Coral Reef Breakthrough estimated a need of \$12 billion USD by 2030 from public and private sources** to conserve, protect, and restore 50% of the world’s coral reefs.

**Bolstering resilience resources**

To forge new sources of public and private funding, the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) launched in 2020 with an aim to prevent functional extinction of coral reefs and its potential consequences for the planet, people, and prosperity. Hosting both a Grant Fund and Investment Fund, GFCR’s **locally led implementation and transformative investments are informed by an integrated ‘protect-transform-restore-recover’ approach targeting coral refugia in 23 countries.**



Powered by a global public-private coalition, GFCR has already secured \$225M USD in commitments, completed needs assessments, and **conducted pipeline building to set the stage for growth of over 400 reef-positive businesses and finance mechanisms across 23 countries with the potential to conserve 3M hectares of coral reefs** (20% of the Breakthrough target).

GFCR's portfolio pipelines include **bankable solutions spanning four key impact sectors**, tailored to address local degradation drivers and help bridge funding deficiencies:

- **Sustainable Ocean Production** (fisheries, aquaculture, mariculture)
- **Sustainable Coastal Development** (ecotourism, mooring systems, natural coastal infrastructure including reef restoration)
- **Circular Economy and Pollution Management** (solid waste management, recycling, wastewater treatment)
- **Financial Mechanisms** (MPA finance, reef insurance, blue carbon, payment for ecosystem services, debt swaps, and bonds)

### **It's UNOC or never for coral reefs**

With GFCR grant funding now well-invested to establish pipelines, supporting technical assistance, and positioned to de-risk, as well as a \$125M first-loss tranche positioned in the GFCR Investment Fund by the Green Climate Fund; **an ubiquitous question remains – *where are the impact investors?***

Forums, publications, and influential actors consistently relay that droves of investors are searching for new ventures in the sustainable blue economy. **GFCR has the pipelines — small, medium, and large-scale enterprises, funds, and instruments — ready to deliver triple bottom line returns for people, life below water, and *their* pockets.**

And it's true; for two years *they* have come to the table. **They have listened, they have learned, they are deliberating; but they are not investing.** Who are '*they*'? The financial institutions – including some of the loudest banks on biodiversity, the philanthropies, the corporates, the family offices, the sovereign wealth funds, and so on.

Except for Builders Initiative led by Lukas Walton and Minderoo Foundation founded by Nicola Forrest, GFCR's Investment Fund has not received any additional investors. More widely, funding gaps indicate impact investors have not ***walked the talk on investing in ocean-positive blue economy and, more specially, coral reefs.***

Recognizing this decade is the last chance for a turning point in favor of coral reef survival, investor **deliberations need a deadline: the 2025 UN Ocean Conference.**